WORDS OF RECONCILIATION.

VOL. I.] MAY, 1885. [No. 5.

THE MISSION OF THIS MAGAZINE.

In view of the large number of religious newspapers and periodicals which swarm in these days from the press, no one has a right to obtrude another upon the Christian public unless it supplies an acknowledged want and has a definite mission. Such a mission, we believe, has fallen to our lot.

I. We seek to arouse the church to the sin and consequent weakness of its divided state.

1. No one can trace out the divine idea of the church, as given in the Scriptures, without perceiving that our existing divisions are abnormal and sinful. They render the church incapable of receiving the plenitude of spiritual gifts with which her Lord at first endowed her, and which are still treasured up in Him for her benefit. As a broken vessel she can neither contain the fullness of truth nor the fullness of life.

2. The Lord has made use, however, of these divisions to conserve and develop special portions of truth. Something for the good of the whole is preserved in each fragment of the one body. We seek to discover that which each contains for the common benefit, and to make it contribute to the ultimate unity of the faith.

3. We seek to exorcise that spirit which induces Christian bodies to push their peculiar forms of truth

and order out of proportion, and into offensive partizanship and competition, to the detriment and neglect of the welfare of the whole body. We would urge each and every member to pray for the whole, upon whose healthful life the prosperity of each depends, and without whose ultimate perfection no one of us can be made perfect.

To those who acknowledge the abstract truth of these principles, but regard them as now utopian and impracticable, we reply that God's truth has a mission in this world, whether human creeds and systems make a place for it or not.

II. But the final perfection of the church is connected in Scripture with the revelation to her, and through her to the world, of the hidden glory of her risen Lord. This magazine, therefore, seeks to press upon the attention of the church this as the true end of her calling. We believe that in her zeal to "convert the world," she has sadly neglected the prime duty of guarding her own purity, and perfecting herself from within, forgetting that if the bride would but "make herself ready," the majestic power and presence of her Lord would soon be so manifest among the nations of the earth, and at the very seats and strongholds of Satan's power, that the reign of evil, both in the hearts of men and in the realm of nature, would soon be broken.

Topics, therefore, connected with the coming of the Lord, which is the goal of the church's progress and the fulfillment of her hopes, will have a special place on these pages.

But this subject connects itself intimately with that of human destiny. We believe that the church has fallen

into partial blindness in respect to the purpose of God in laying hold of humanity, in the person of His Son. His assumption of our nature and its victory over death, in Him, has won back for the race the life which its sin has forfeited; so that its promised resurrection is a redemption. In this domain of eschatology we aim, therefore, to show:

1. That while the church doctrine of eternal punishment has in it elements of truth, it has so obtruded this doctrine as to push back into obscurity and neglect this "hope toward God that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust." It has so quenched the light of this hope as to make resurrection to be but a temporary lifting of a large proportion of the race out of the gloom of death in order that they may be plunged into a deeper gulf of endless horror and despair. We aim therefore to rescue the gospel of the grace of God from this monstrous and unscriptural perversion. We shall show that the doom of hell, which Jesus threatens, is the intense and ultimate form of that death-penalty which God at first pronounced against sin; that its first infliction, as is shown in the parable of the rich man, precedes resurrection, and that Jesus' words concerning judgment for sin do not conflict with this view of resurrection as a redemption-blessing, secured for all mankind by Him who tasted death for every man.

2. We carefully maintain, however, that this universal redemption to life is not universal salvation, still less the ultimate glorification of all. It only provides that, after the death-sentence has been fully executed upon the unjust, in the casting of body and soul into hell, that death

shall not put them forever beyond any operation of the grace of God for their relief.

3. It is our aim also to adjust to this great truth of redemption through resurrection whatever is true in the doctrine of conditional immortality. Its advocates have certainly helped to clear up the darkness of this subject by making it plain that man is not inherently immortal. They have usually fallen however into this same mistake of making resurrection, for all who are out of Christ, a mere prelude to retribution, which they believe to be everlasting *destruction.*

They are very likely right in insisting that this is the doom of those who die the second death. But we may be sure that God will not raise any man out of death merely for the purpose of killing him a second time. There must have been in the case of those upon whom this penalty is again visited, a period of life after resurrection in which there has been obstinate sin and continued rejection of Him who alone can save from it.

Thus we believe we have a mission of reconcilation to those who hold these diverse views of human destiny. The doctrine of redemptive resurrection runs a path of light through the darkness and perplexities of all these theories. We have been surprised, indeed, in reading the recent works of able writers upon these themes, such as Dean Plumptree, how, with all their instructive glimpses into the darkness of this subject they do not penetrate it, and this because they fail to hold up clearly the torch of this hope. None of them seem to apprehend that judgment for sin, which is death and bondage in hell, is inflicted before resurrection; and that therefore resur-

rection brings deliverance. We are not unmindful that it perpetuates the results of previous judgment also. It brings only to believers eternal life. But life restored to the unjust, even though it may be life still degraded and fettered and crippled and distressed, and under the hazards of a second failure, is better than death.

These views of human destiny are not only Scriptural: they accord also with that revelation which God has made of Himself to the reason and conscience of man, and with all that science teaches concerning the laws which condition human life. Moreover they enter so deeply into that knowledge of God which is the basis of all religion, and in which standeth our eternal life, that we are justified in assuming that the church can never arrive at the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God as sent by the Father to save the world, until she comes to see this meaning in His resurrection, and to understand her own place and calling in relation to that plan of redemption of which this is the Corner Stone.

ELECTION.—A doctrine of election is plainly taught in the Bible. The difficulties which so many Christians have in receiving it would disappear if we would come to see that the blessings which God bestows upon any chosen class are not designed to terminate upon themselves. They are selected in order that they may become vessels for conveying His grace to others. The chosen seed of this dispensation are a royal priesthood. (1 Peter ii: 9.) They fulfill this office now. But the Book of Revelation teaches that their highest exercise of it pertains to the future.

STUDIES IN THE BIBLE.

CORRECTION THROUGH JUDGMENT.

That the visitations of God's anger, under which men suffer, are *disciplinary* as well as penal is a prime feature in Old Testament teaching. The 26th chapter of Leviticus contains a catalogue of terrible evils that should come upon the people for their sins. They were to be driven out of their own land into captivity, where they should perish among the heathen, and be eaten up by the land of their enemies. (Verse 38.) But if, in the place of their banishment, they should turn again to the Lord in humility and should "*accept of the punishment of their iniquity*," (vs. 41-43.) Jehovah promises to remember His covenant and to forgive and restore them.

The subsequent history of Israel fully illustrates this gracious dealing. "Many times did He deliver them; but they provoked Him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. Nevertheless He regarded their affliction when He heard their cry: And he remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His mercies." (Ps. cvi: 43-45.) The prophet Micah (vii: 7-10,) expresses in language beautiful and touching, the faith and penitence of the people when thus humbled under the mighty hand of God. "Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me. Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the Lord,

because I have sinned against him, until He plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness." In this passage two principles are distinctly asserted. 1. Those who sin against the Lord must be borne down under the burden of His indignation. 2. If, in their low estate, they "accept the punishment of their iniquity," the Lord will rise up for their relief and plead their cause, and execute judgment upon their enemies. Isaiah (xl: 1-2), at the beginning of the second division of his prophecy, which is so full of the hopes and triumphs of the future, breaks out with this message of grace to Israel.— "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned:* for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

Here again a return of the Lord's favor is declared after His people had suffered a double, that is, a most ample punishment for their sins. Humbled and penitent, the Lord now turns toward them in grace. And the subsequent chapters are bright with the splendors of their glorious future.

It is unnecessary to multiply proofs from the Old Testament of this important feature in the dealings of God with men. All our readers recognize it and will admit without hesitation its application to the history of

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* Robert Young translates this phrase "*accepted hath been her punishment.*" As the Hebrew words are the same as occur in Lev. xxvi: 41-43. it seems just to make their translation in Isaiah conform to this previous usage.

individuals and of nations in this sphere of time. God's judgments are, without doubt, disciplinary and restorative this side the grave. In this world, at least, "He will not always chide, neither will He keep His anger forever."

But here the inquiry must be raised whether this principle of divine dealing does not reach beyond this sphere of temporal suffering. To this we reply that there is nothing in the Old Testament, and it will be borne in mind that our investigation is now confined to these older Scriptures, which requires us to limit it to this life. God cannot change. If there be no restorative effect in His judgments beyond this life, it cannot be from any change in Him or in the principles of His government. It must result from the obduracy of the creature, whose character for evil becomes fixed at death. There is a class of texts in the Old Testament which seem to imply that this is the case. We read, for instance (Prov. xxix. 1), "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy." But then, it may be asked, do such passages announce the only and the *ultimate* principle of God's dealing with sinners. They certainly announce this important principle, that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." But it is also an equal principle, set forth, as we have seen, in the Song of Moses and verified in all subsequent Scripture, that God's judgments are corrective as well as penal. In the case of His people they are even redemptive. Now death is the final form of His judgments. Into the hands of this enemy they should finally be delivered. (Lev. xxvi. 25.) Of this

captivity all others were but a type. But from it there was to be a deliverance. And this implies that there could not be in them such fixedness of evil character as to preclude their turning to the Lord from out the emptiness and gloom of this bondage. And, therefore, the frequent promises of God to hear the cry of His imprisoned people, to loose their bonds, to plead their cause against the enemy, (Micah vii. 8, 9.) and to bring the prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water (Zech. ix. 11)* must reach over to and include their bondage in death. The words of Moses, (Deut. xxx. 4,) seem to imply precisely this: "If any of thine be driven out unto the *outmost parts of heaven*, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will He fetch thee." We shall see hereafter that God's promises of redemption are well nigh meaningless and his plan of redemption fruitless, unless they include this very purpose to ransom His people from death, after He has sent them, for their sins, far away into this land of captivity, and after they have there reaped the bitter fruits of their iniquity, and have been brought to accept its punishment. We shall be obliged to admit that, in the case of sinning Israel at least, the promise reaches even to the captives in the realms of death, "For I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me and the souls which I have made." (Ish. lvii. 16.)

If this be so, it establishes the important principle that, in the view of the Old Testament, God's covenant people did not pass beyond the bounds of His disciplin-

* See Jeremy Taylor's use of this passage, as quoted by Dean Plumptree, *Spirits in Prison*, page 97.

ary dealing into an unalterable state of rewards and punishments, when they passed the bounds of death. The realm of death was, to them, the land of their worst captivity, where they came under the severest discipline of Him who is the Judge of His people, and where there could be no escape from the fire of His anger. To suppose there could be no change in them, under this punishment, except an ever increasing hardening in wickedness, is to run counter to the whole spirit of its teaching concerning God's ways toward them, and to deny to Him and to His moral government the attributes which it is the very purpose of these Holy Scriptures to reveal.

HADES AND GEHENNA.

The first of these terms is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew term Sheol. It denotes the abode of the dead. It is that place in the unseen world where the dead await resurrection. The Old Testament saints expected to go down to Sheol. (Gen. xxxvii: 35; Job xvii: 13) Both Lazarus and the rich man went to Hades. (Luke xvi.)

The word *Gehenna* is derived from *Ge Hinnom.* Its first use is in Jeremiah vii: 31-32. The valley of Hinnom becomes in his vision, the "valley of slaughter." The place referred to was a valley near Jerusalem, used for the deposit of offal. It was necessary to keep purifying fires burning there to destroy the foul accumulations. Hence it presented a vivid picture of the decay and of the destructive processes which go on in the realm of death. The burning fires, as the most active agent in

this work of destruction, bore the most impressive testimony to it.

Before the time of Christ the Rabbis had superinduced upon the Old Testament conception of sheol or hell the idea of it as a place of torment. A portion of Hades, in their view, was set apart for the ungodly heathen and wicked Jews. Dean Plumptree, in his *Spirits in Prison, etc.*, (pp. 31-56.), after an unusually fair and candid examination of the Talmudic teaching, and of the recent views of it taken by Dr. Pusey on the one side, and Archdeacon Farrar on the other, and of the midway position taken by Dr. Edersheim in his *Life of Christ*, states the results as follows. "The evidence points to the conclusions that in the time of our Lord, as in earlier and later periods, among heathen and Christian thinkers, there were current among men opinions of very varied character, that those who listened to his teaching were familiar with the thought of a blessedness that endured forever, of a penalty of which there might be an end for some and not for others, of a process of suffering which might end in annihilation or in the restoration of the soul that suffered, and in which it might be helped by the prayers of those that yet remained on earth."

Our Lord, in adopting the term *Gehenna*, made use of the current opinions about future punishment. As to whether He referred to a destructive process whose issue was annihilation or purgation is not clear from the use of the term itself. Nor can it be determined from the current usage of it in His day. Of one thing we may be sure. In making use of the term, Jesus did not endorse all the Rabbinical conceits and traditions that were gathered

around it. Still less did He mean to set aside the Old Testament view of what is implied in going down to hell. He, however, enlarged that conception and made more definite and emphatic the punitive aspect in it. The term *Gehenna* originally brought to view the devouring energy with which the bodies and souls of men are consumed in Hades by the fire of God's wrath against sin. And this is the sense in which Jesus employed it.

And from this point of view the two terms *Hades* and *Gehenna* are seen to be allied. Either term brings to view a penalty, the wages of sin, which are death. The latter term greatly intensifies this thought of penalty. It is applied only to evil-doers, to whom death brings an unmitigated and a dreadful retribution.

To show that the two terms are connected we observe that even the righteous of Old Testament times looked forward to going down to hell (sheol) as an evil and a penalty. Death was the sentence originally imposed upon man for sin. Hence men like Job and David and Hezekiah could not view it in any other light than as a calamity. Good men submitted to it as the just judgment of God.

Their faith, indeed, in very early times, began to grasp the hope of a deliverance from death and a triumph over it. And especially in the later Old Testament times, the idea became definite that there was a place of shelter and rest and blissful anticipation, even in Hades, for the righteous. This was "Abraham's bosom." The Father of the faithful must be so honored, even in the place of the dead, as to be a shield and protection to his faithful children.

But still the uniform idea attached to "Sheol" was that it is a place of banishment, of imprisonment, of sorrow and gloom to the wicked, and of patient waiting to the righteous, where they were indeed "comforted," (Luke xvi: 25.) but not yet delivered. That the pious dead of the old dispensation were set free by Christ's victory is implied in such passages as Ephes. iv: 8-9; I Peter iii: 18-22.*

We may believe also that His resurrection has unbarred these gates for the righteous dead of this dispensation. But for all who die in their sins there still remains this punishment. They must go down to hell, and be held there as captives behind its bars of gloom. So much of punishment inheres in the Sheol or Hades feature of hell.

But for the wicked there is a still worse feature in this penalty. The whole being of man, body and soul, may be there consumed. This is the Gehenna feature of hell. It is not a penalty distinct from that implied in going down to Sheol. It does not belong to another category. But it is a much more vehement and abiding form of this punishment. That the two terms, Hades and Gehanna, are thus connected is seen in the fact that the rich man went to *Hades.* And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment.

We are warranted, therefore, in concluding that the Old Testament and New Testament ideas of being "turned into hell" are not essentially distinct. Hell, in any view of it, is the place of *destruction.*

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* See remarks by Dr. Craven in Lange's Com. on Revelation, pg. 373.

Our Saviour brought out into greater definiteness the idea which had already found place in the Jewish faith, that it was also to evil-doers a place of prolonged suffering. He taught that the death-process was more than the killing of the body. The soul, as distinct from the spirit, pertains to embodiment, and may be destroyed.

The complete casting out of man from his inheritance in this system of creation requires the destruction of body and soul. The creature suffering this destruction becomes an outcast, a naked spirit, seeking rest and finding none. How long this death-process lasts we do not know. But the completed destruction of embodied life under the consuming fire of God's judgments is the Gehenna punishment. The agents in effecting it are the destructive forces of this created system. And as fire is the most energetic form of this agency, it is fitly denominated the Gehenna of fire.

But whether viewed as destruction in Hades or Gehenna, the radical, essential feature of it is death. A death, however, protracted beyond the death of the body; embracing the soul and leaving the sinner cast out of his heritage of life and manhood in which God gave him a place and opened before him a glorious destiny.

And now we come to the important fact in this matter of punishment in hell, that *it is inflicted before resurrection.* If there is a subsequent casting into the lake of fire, it must come after a resurrection, and be the penalty incurred after life has been again conferred. A second death must follow a second period of life. (Rev. xx.) But the penalty of sin before us in *this* life, and the one to which Jesus constantly refers, is a punishment in hell

before resurrection. The rich man was cast at once into this place of torment. No other time of going to hell occurred to men familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures, than at the event of death.

Death, the wages of sin, opened the door for man into Hades. And the being cast into Gehenna was only the intense form of the same idea of punitive destruction.

The fire of hell then, from this point of view, is seen to be an ever impending judgment. It is not something to be dreaded in a remote future, after a far distant judgment scene. It yawns now beneath the feet of the ungodly. And this hell-fire is the eternal fire. (Compare Matt. xviii: 8 with vs. 9.) And it is as truly a punishment of natural law as it is of moral law. All that is imperfect and evil in these forms of created life must go down to destruction. The mighty forces of nature dissolve and consume them. Fire stands as the appropriate representative of these devouring forces. It is their concentrated energy. Sinful man, as belonging to this old creation, must be given over to it. Jesus came as the Head of the new Creation, out of which all things that offend shall be cast into a furnace of fire. There is no way of avoiding this judgment but by connection in pure and conquering life with Him. He exhorts men, therefore, to submit to the severest judgment against the vices of their evil nature, to bring their old man to the cross. Better now lose the hand or the foot that offends, the eye that roves in evil lustings, than, having all these members to be cast into hell, into the fire that never can be quenched.

And here we notice a surprising inference which has

been drawn from this attribute of the fire as quenchless. It is difficult to see how any one familiar with the frequent use of this expression by the Old Testament prophets (Jer. xvii: 4; Ezek. xx: 47.) could infer that the Saviour meant to teach, because the fire is quenchless, that the torment inflicted by it is endless. In every use of it in the Old Testament, it describes a judgment-process which cannot possibly be arrested until it has done its work. Its first use in the New Testament conveys the same sense. John the Baptist declares (Matt. iii: 12,) that the Messiah s work of judgment would be thus thorough. "Whose fan is in His hand and He will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will *burn up* the chaff with unquenchable fire." Would any sensible reader suppose that these words imply the preservation of the chaff in the fire for an endless burning?

And so with the hell-fire into which sinners are cast. It is the Messiah's agent for destroying all that is evil in the old creation. Sinful men, who belong to this evil system, must go down into this age-during fire. At the final purgation of all things, the devil and his angels, the evil powers of this system, shall be cast into it. It is prepared for them. This, we say, is the law of nature, as of God. It is the law by which the old creation must be cleansed, before it can pass out into the glory and beauty of the new. The only escape from it is through that process of self-judgment which every man passes through who truly surrenders himself to Christ for salvation. Judging himself at His cross, he is not henceforth judged with the world. And failing to so judge himself

even the Christian is delivered unto Satan "for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. v: 5.)

God's great law of judgment is thus uniform and without respect of persons. All that is evil is doomed to the eternal fire. This is the law of Creation and of His Word. And the casting into hell-fire is as truly a process of the present as of the future.

But we again insist that, with the exception of that final scene in Revelation xx. which, as we have said, describes the judgment which follows resurrection and a second period of life, and issues in a second death, all the New Testament references to the punishment in hell refer to what takes place before resurrection. It is the obscuration of this great principle which has misled the church into her sombre and rigid view of an endless torment in hell, and which has so belied the character of our Father God, and introduced such confusions and contradictions into the thoughts of Christians concerning His ways.

THE WORD *Κόλασιν*.—Dean Plumptree in *Spirits in Prison*, pp. 61, 368, calls attention to the fact that the word used by our Lord in Matt. xxv: 46, to define the æonian punishment "was one which carried with it, strictly interpreted, the thought that it was inflicted for the sake of the sufferer." Any one consulting Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon can verify this statement. Under the word *κολάζω* Aristotle (Rhet. 1: 10) is referred to as thus distinguishing this word from *τιμωρέομαι*. "The former regards the *correction of the offender*, the latter *the satisfaction of the offended*."

MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.

THE NEW THEOLOGY.

Two phases of religious thought go under this name.

1. The first is associated with low views of inspiration. It seeks relief from the hard doctrines of Scripture in some theory of its structure which subordinates the divine element and exalts the human. It makes such wide room for human idiosyncrasies and infirmities, and even the lower grade of human motives, in its composition and compilation as to leave men free to degrade from the high level of divinely authorized teaching those potions against which reason, or it may be, religious consciousness rebels.

We are aware that there is a human element in the Word, as there was in the Word made flesh. We can admit too that the outward form of that Word may have been somewhat marred in the human handling of it. And yet we hold to the general statement that the Bible, both as to its substance and its *form*, is the inspired Word of God. Otherwise we have no certain standard. We have therefore no sympathy with this kind of new departure in Theology.

2. The other phase is that which holds on reverently to the Scriptures as the infallible standard of truth in the things concerning man and God to which it testifies. It concedes authority, indeed, to the religious consciousness, but only as it is enlightened and controlled by the Spirit, who speaks in the Sacred Scriptures. But it is unwilling to assume that we have yet found out all which

this book contains. It believes that the best and only illumination of its "hard sayings" must come from the light which itself conveys. And whatever of new truth this light reveals it accepts, whether it can be made to fit in with existing creeds and systems or not.

With this sort of new theology we profess sympathy. We are not unmindful of its dangers. This spirit of investigation is often irreverent and rash and hasty. It often fails to respect the past. It would demolish rather than build up and adorn. It may take the form of a sinful love for novelties. It may think of itself far more highly than it ought to think, and not soberly, according as God hath dealt to it the measure of faith. In short, it may love notoriety or intellectual gratification or curious prying into mysteries more than it loves the Church or seeks the honor of its Lord. But, with all these dangers, a true spirit of inquiry cannot be suppressed in the church without a quenching of the Spirit. Where the Spirit of the Lord is there must be liberty. Better that a man should diverge here and there from the truth, if he be honest, than that he should hold these treasures of doctrine simply in a formal or traditional way. These truths are of little value to us, unless they are convictions honestly arrived at from our own study of the Word, and unless they enter into the structure of our own spiritual manhood.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Bishop Thirwall's charge, referred to in our last number, suggests to us these as points of doctrine con-

cerning the Lord's Supper, in which all Christians agree. 1. It is a memorial. 2. It is an act of worship. 3. The bread and wine in some way represent the body and blood of Christ. 4. These elements, to the worthy recipient, signify and seal our participation in the resurrection life of Him whose body, for us, was given in sacrifice.

The point of controversy for centuries in the church has been as to whether these elements were ordained to be the ordinary channels through which that life is conveyed.

The sacramentarian system is based upon the affirmation that these are the appointed channels. The new birth is conferred in Baptism. The life, thus bestowed, is nourished through the bread and wine, which become, after consecration, the real Body and Blood of Christ, changed in substance, as the Roman Catholics affirm, or as Protestant Ritualists teach, so penetrated by His Real Presence as to contain and convey His body and blood.

To this theory there are these strong objections.

1. It is not required by our Lord's words at the time of institution. The uppermost thought in His words is, the commemoration of a *sacrifice.*

2. It depreciates the many passages of Scripture which represent the Word of God, or the belief of that Word, as the means through which the Spirit conveys life. (I Peter i: 23; St. John i: 12; I John v: 9-13, etc.)

3. It puts the ministration of that life into the hands of a human priesthood. This contravenes the teaching of the epistle to the Hebrews, (chs. vii–x.)

4. Neither the sermons of the apostles recorded in the Acts, nor their epistles to the churches assume that the eternal life, of which the risen Lord was the source, was to be conveyed to men through such channels of priestly mediation. They represent it as a free gift from God to those who "believe on" the Lord Jesus Christ, and confess that God hath raised Him from the dead. Baptism is the appointed ordinance for this confession. But it is not essential for the conveyance of the life. Otherwise how could St. Paul write, "For Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel."

And this leads us to state what we believe to be the true apostolic view of the Lord's Supper. The principal allusions to it in the epistles are found in I Cor. x: 16-21; xi: 20-29. It is there defined to be a *communion* of the body and blood of Christ. The primary idea of the Greek word κοινωνία is *partnership*. The fundamental fact in our redemption is that we are made partners with Christ in His sacrifice and in His new life which is given to the world on the ground of it. In other words we are partners with Him in His death and resurrection. Our communion with Him in His death is both objective and subjective. We died in Him in that His death upon the cross was *for* us, and we die with Him, in dying out of the old life of sin. And this we do in the power of His risen Life, in which He makes us partners with Him.

Now the Lord's Supper testifies, in the most impressive way, to this vital fact of joint partnership. We are one body with Christ, and together we constitute one body in Him. It is both a sign to us and a seal, His own signet-token, that we are now one with Him in all

the benefits of His blood shedding, and in all the fullness of His life.

From this point of view, we see that the Lord's Supper does not renew or perpetuate the sacrifice made once for all. It is the witness and pledge that by that sacrifice He has obtained our eternal redemption. It does not convey His Life in any other way than as the Word conveys it. It is a concrete word, addressing us through the senses of sight and touch and taste, as the spoken Word reaches us through the ear. But it strengthens in us the life by speaking to us, through Christ's own symbols, of our perfect union with Him in life. The ordinance is therefore a sacramental pledge to us of a redemption already accomplished, and of a life already bestowed, rather than a restricted channel through which that life is conveyed.

Hence it is an act of worship. We adore in it Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. It is an act of thanksgiving for so great benefits. It is an approach into the Holy of Holies. We come into the immediate presence of God in the person of Him who has made us one with Himself, and whose blood is sprinkled for us on the mercy seat. It is nourishment and strength; for it is very contact in life with Him who is Our Life.

And yet all this blessing does not come in a different channel from that of the Word. The Incarnate Word, the Word spoken, the Word concrete in this ordinance is the one channel of life. We cannot separate these.

We dare not adopt a theory which confines this Almighty, all-pervading Word of Life within the trammels of a ritual system.

Men, indeed, are the chosen dispensers of God's grace to their fellows. But His Word of grace is too broad and too free to be tied up as men would tie it. In the Old Testament times it broke through all priestly lines and rites, when these proved ineffectual, and raised up an order of prophets to proclaim it. And we shall likewise fail in the use of sacred things, if we suppose that the life-giving energy of God's Spirit, and the rich provisions of His grace, are closely confined in ordinances, even of His own appointment. Our safety must lie in regarding them as pledges of inestimable benefits *conferred*, rather than as channels through which these benefits are to be distributed or, it may be, doled out at the hands of human mediators.

We have still one other thought upon this subject. It is this. All views of this sacrament which keep in the background the idea of the unity of the body are self-condemned The passages from St. Paul's epistle already referred to make the thought of our union in life with one another as prominent as our union in life with Him. "For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." And yet how far is the church from realizing "the communion of saints." Our differing views of these holy mysteries have arisen largely from the obscuration in the church of this doctrine of our union in life with one another. We have allowed the one body to be broken up into fragments. We have made the Lord's table the table of a sect. We have excluded from our sympathies, our prayers and our love the members of the one body, many of them weak and ignorant perhaps, who differ from us.

How seldom do we hear, for example, at our sectarian tables prayer for the whole body, for its unity and perfection for blessing upon those who are ignorant and out of the way, for light from the Holy Ghost to reveal to us the truth concerning the things wherein we differ, to bring us out of our ignorances and dissensions into the true unity of the faith, and to make us indeed one body in Him who is our one Lord and Life.

We may be sure that the divisive views concerning these holy mysteries in the church would fast disappear before such feeling of communion in one body which this holy ordinance was appointed to bear witness to and to nurture. We may all well question the correctness of our views of it, if we find it failing to produce in us this feeling of love for the whole company of Christ's redeemed, with whom we are united in the oneness of His life, and of which blessed union this ordinance was designed to be the witness to us, and to the world, to the end of time.

PRAYER.

O God, who hast knit together all who have been baptized in the name of Thy Son Jesus Christ into one mystical body, bless, we beseech thee, the one body of the one Lord. Carry each member of it safely through his appointed trial and discipline. Replenish it with all Heavenly gifts and graces. Heal its dissensions and divisions. Let the power of Thy Spirit be manifest in all its holy offices and ministries; that so taught and guided and governed by Thee, we may all come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. So shall we evermore offer unto Thy Holy Name the incense of true praise, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

NOTES ON CURRENT OPINIONS AND EVENTS.

THE PRESBYTERY OF WEST JERSEY.—At a recent session of this body, the Rev. L. C. Baker offered the following paper for adoption as an overture to the General Assembly. It was seconded, but for lack of sufficient time for the discussion of so important a subject, it was put upon the docket to be considered at the next stated meeting.

"In view of the unformed and varying opinions prevalent in the Church concerning great questions in Eschatology, and in view also of the immense importance which attaches to the testimony of the Church upon matters of such vital interest, in its bearing upon both the good conscience of her ministers and the faith of their hearers, this Presbytery would respectfully petition the General Assembly to appoint a suitable committee, whose duty it shall be,

"1. To consider whether the doctrine of our Confession concerning the final results of God's dealings with mankind, as set forth in Chapter xxxiii, Questions 29, 89, Larger Catechism, and elsewhere, is a complete and final expression of the teaching of Holy Scripture upon this subject.

"2. To propose any alterations or explanations in the statements of our Standards upon this subject which may seem to them advisable, and to report any such proposed changes to the succeeding General Assembly for its suitable action in the premises."

For the convenient information of those interested, we give below the principal statements from the Standards to which reference is made.

Chap. xxxiii; Sec. 2. "The end of God's appointing this day is for the manifestation of the glory of His mercy in the salvation of the elect; and of His justice in the damnation of the reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient. For then shall the righteous go into everlasting life and receive that fullness of joy and refreshing which shall come from the presence of the Lord; but the wicked, who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."

Question 29. Larger Catechism. *Answer.* 'The punishments of sin in the world to come are, everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission in hell-fire forever."

Question 89. *Answer.* "At the day of judgment, the wicked shall be set on Christ's left hand, and upon clear evidence, and full conviction of their own consciences, shall have the fearful but just sentence of condemnation pronounced against them; and thereupon shall be cast out from the favorable presence of God, and the glorious fellowship with Christ, his saints and all his holy angels, into hell, to be punished with unspeakable torments both of body and soul, with the devil and his angels forever."

Two radical misconceptions, we believe, underlie these statements.

1. They assume that the cardinal proof-text Matt. xxv: 31–46, and related passages refer to a punishment inflicted *after* resurrection. Dr. S. H. Kellogg in his article upon "Future Probation" in the *Presbyterian Review, April No.*, rightly affirms that the judgment-scene in Matt. xxv. relates to living nations. It, therefore, *precedes* resurrection. Had the Westminster divines taken the same view of this passage, they could not have constructed the above formulas.

2. They misconceive the place and meaning of resurrection in the divine plan of creation and redemption. Proof-texts are interpreted apart from their place in the general unfolding of that plan through the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

We are far, however, from claiming to have found out the whole truth about this matter. But, apart from any modifications we would suggest, there is one consideration which clearly justifies this appeal to the combined wisdom of the church. There is a confessed and widespread divergence between the present forms of stating the doctrine of future punishment in Presbyterian pulpits and these formulas. Two explanations of this are possible: 1. Either the ministers of that church are not honest in their preaching of it. Or, 2. They have been led to see that these statements are not "a complete and final expression of the teaching of Holy Scripture upon this subject." We much prefer the latter explanation. And, if this be the true one, we cannot emphasize too strongly the obligation of the church to provide her ministry with statements of doctrine to which they can adhere without evasion, and which they can honestly and fearlessly proclaim, commending themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God

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Reply to "The Truth."—*The Truth*, published at St. Louis, contains two recent articles upon "Future Punishment." In the

last of these the Editor quotes from this magazine. He, throughout, assumes that all who do not accept the traditional doctrine of an endless torment in hell are

1. Unwilling to submit their own judgments in this matter to the plain teaching of God's Word.

2. They are not content to rest in the conviction that the Judge of all the earth will do right, and are disposed to dictate to Him what He ought to do.

For ourselves we are not conscious that we have ever written a line under the influence of either of these sentiments. We utterly repudiate them. All we have published in these pages upon this dark subject has been based upon these convictions:

1. The whole of God's truth about it, as contained in His Word, has not yet been brought out.

2. The hope of resurrection is a larger hope than we have been accustomed to regard it, and it sheds a light upon the dark mystery of future punishment to which we have no right to shut our eyes.

If it can be shown that, in any single line, we have not reverently treated God's Word, or failed to submit to its judgments, we will most gladly revoke it. Whatever mistakes we may have made in interpretation, surely no one who has read the series of "Studies in the Bible," or our other articles upon this subject can accuse us of seeking any other basis for the support of these views than the rock of this unchanging Word. And we are equally confident that we have not written anything which justifies the suspicion that we have any other thoughts concerning the judgments of our God than that they are true and righteous altogether.

We hold in the highest esteem the brother who edits *The Truth*. Our affectionate sympathy with him in the past, in many of the features of gospel truth to which he has given testimony, is known to many of our readers. We believe him to be a most loyal studen of the Word and a devoted servant of the Master. On this account it is painful to differ with him on so important a matter of Scripture teaching. And still more painful to rest under his implied charge that, in so differing, we are setting up our own opinions above the Word of God. The whole issue we have raised relates to the proper understanding of that Word. And we are quite sure that, if he

will take the pains to read again what we have written on this subject, he will see that, however he may refuse to accept our interpretations, he has no warrant for assuming that they have been dictated by a spirit of insubordination to its teaching.

The approval of ourselves to human judgments is, however, a small matter compared with the interests of the truth involved. We entreat, therefore, our brethren, without prejudice to examine their Bibles afresh upon these points.

1. Are all mankind to be raised from the dead in virtue of the redemption accomplished by Christ Jesus?

2. If so, must not the recovery to life of men consigned to death on account of sin be a gracious act?

3. Does the fact that the resurrection of the unjust is "unto condemnation" prove that their restored life will be only an unmitigated curse? Are there not many in this present life "condemned already" (John iii. 18, 36) to whom existence brings some blessing?

4. Is not the punishment in hell, of which our Saviour speaks, (Mark ix. 43-48; Matt. xxv. 41,) and of which He gives us a picture in the parable of the rich man (Luke xvi,) inflicted before resurrection?

5. How can such promises as Gen. xii. 3; Ps. lxxxvi. 9; Isa. xix. 25; Jer. xlviii. 47; xlix. 6, 39; Ezek. xvi. 53-63, and xxxvii, be fulfilled, if we are to hold that death forever closed the door of hope upon all these sinful nations? In what other way can blessing reach these past generations of men except through resurrection?

6. Has not the Church mistaken the very meaning of resurrection in assuming that great masses of mankind are to be raised for no other end than retribution and aggravation of torment?

7. What are the obligations resting upon an appointed pastor and teacher in the Church who has been led to see that she has made this great mistake?

England and Russia.—The world is waiting, in intense anxiety, to see whether the struggle which is impending between these two great empires shall now begin. At our present writing it seems likely to be postponed; although few doubt but that it must come before long. When two great nations are crowding toward the same goal of universal empire, (for the larger they become, the

more impatient are they of limits,) it is evident that the end must be a giant conflict. We shall be thankful if the Christian moderation and love of righteousness which the present Prime Minister of England has heretofore displayed shall avail to ward off the danger, and save the world the woes of such a widespread and sanguinary war. There are many things to be thankful for, even amid this dark picture of selfishness and ambition and greed which the world presents.

Students of prophecy will be especially on the alert at this time. The fate of Israel and of the Holy Land will, doubtless, be involved in this struggle, whenever it comes. And Christian people in all ages have so read the Scriptures as to believe that the emergence of that people and land out from under the dark shadow which has so long rested upon them will be a sign to the world that its rejected King is at hand.

With respect, however, to this great issue of His coming, we would remind our readers that there are two lines of approach along which we may look for it. We may be occupied with watching the world's diplomacies and gathering armies and be on the *qui vive* for omens and portents and impending battles without finding in all this anything to feed our spiritual life or to make our own hearts a suitable abode for our Lord's presence. Rather, therefore, would we learn to look for the signs of His approach along another line of proofs. We would discern it less in the thickening clouds of evil than in the nearer manifestations of Himself in the hearts and lives of those who wait for Him. We believe the first signs of the coming kingdom will be in an intensity of spiritual life among those who are the heirs of it. Pentecost will be repeated. And while there will be "wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath; blood and fire and vapor of smoke," there will also be such spiritual energy as will reveal the Christ in Christly men, and so prepare the way for such revelation of His presence as shall make His kingdom, now hidden, the one visible, all-embracing fact. We would not be understood as meaning by this that nothing more is to be expected on the earth than what is called His spiritual reign. We cannot conceive of any complete spiritual reign that does not pervade and *transfigure* the physical. When His kingdom has fully "come," the bodies of His saints could not bear the weigh

of its glory, revealed in them and through them, without a change. Hence we read that they "shall be changed." The bodies of their humiliation shall be fashioned like unto the body of His glory. Nor will the earth be a suitable platform for the triumphs of that kingdom without a "regeneration." It may not be sudden and simultaneous. We believe it will be progressive. But, in this sphere of nature also, the fullness of spiritual power in the kingdom must reach and transform the creature. But, first of all, and the sign above all that Christians should be waiting for, is this sign of the Son of Man is in the sky of their own souls. They should come together with one accord in one place to pray for it. In this way alone shall we be looking for and hasting the coming of that day, and be ourselves prepared to meet it.

A VOICE FROM THE ORIENT.—The Rev. Mangasar Mangasarian, a native Armenian, well-known as the pastor of a Presbyterian Church in this city, has published a volume of his sermons. We have read them with interest. They must have been received with pleasure by the congregations that heard them. They show much of Oriental fervor and exuberance of thought and imagery and spiritual insight. Best of all, there is the warm glow of love to God and to man. They lack, however, in full, incisive testimony to the great truths of man's need as a sinner, and of God's grace in providing a Saviour just suited to that need.

It is easy to discover from them that the author cherishes the "wider hope;" although, he is not always careful to give an intelligent Scriptural reason for it. It comes in the way of frequent suggestion rather than formal statement. And, therefore, it is not always properly guarded. For instance, in a recent sermon, not published, however, in this volume, these words occur: "If justice is eternal, love is eternal. If eternal justice must pursue and scourge the sinner forever, eternal love must follow and draw the sinner forever. God is a Father, and He punishes not for revenge, but for gracious purposes." These words are doubtless true, and we are glad to quote them, as coming from a Presbyterian pulpit. And yet they might leave the impression that the love of the Divine Father cannot in any case be defrauded of its end; and that, therefore, all

men will by it be reached and saved. They need, therefore, to be qualified by that side of truth which represents man as able to resist that love, even under the gracious influences of the world to come, until he sinks into the abyss of the second death.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A correspondent sends us the following definition of the word "eternal." It is clear and well expressed.

Αἰώνιος is an adjective, and it is derived from the noun αἰῶν, "an age," a limited period of time, which may be past, present, or future. Being a derivative it refers to and indicates an attribute belonging to that from which it is derived. Its true and legitimate meaning, therefore, has no reference to an unlimited period, neither does it indicate the attribute of an unlimited period, that described by the term "eternal" or "everlasting," by which it is usually translated, for αἰῶν has no such attribute; but it is used to point out the circumstance of being connected with or having some kind of relation to an "age." Aionian life is that which shall be manifested through the spiritual body in a future age; aionian fire is that which has been prepared for the devil and his angels in a future age; aionian punishment (κόλασιν, cutting off,) and aionian destruction are the dealings of God with wicked men in a future age; aionian gospel is that declared to those living at the time of judgment in a future age. Aionian life is indeed everlasting; but that fact does not depend alone and distinctively on the circumstance of being aionian, but on the fact of being the gift of God, having its source in Him who exists throughout all the ages, and that He is the creator and preserver of all those who are judged worthy to obtain the resurrection from among the dead. O. F. S.

We agree, in the main, with the above; although the question whether "eternal" punishment is without any possible end or limit can never be settled by the controversies that are raised over the meaning of this word. This question was settled at once for us when we came to see that God has made abundant promises concerning Israel and other nations whom, for their sins, He consigned to death and hell, which cannot be fulfilled in any other way than through a resurrection. This must, of course, terminate their present sentence. They may incur, however, a second penalty. And this accords with the uniform Hebrew usage of the phrase *l'olam*,

which is the equivalent of the Greek εἰς αἰώνα, from which we derive through the Latin, *ad æternum*, our word "eternal." Not even the Talmudists, who advanced far beyond the Old Testament teaching in their ideas of future punishment, ever projected the *olam* of its duration beyond resurrection. This, for men or for nations, was its bound.

"Will men multiply during the thousand years reign of Christ on the earth? Will the wicked dead be raised with incorruptible bodies?"

It would be better to speak of this reign of Christ as *over* the earth. Such is the proper force of ἐπί in the passage, (Rev. v. 10,) and it is so translated in connection with the idea of ruling, Luke xii. 42; Acts vi. 3; Rev. ii. 26, etc. The "age to come" we should describe as one in which "the heavens shall be opened." Glorified saints will then come into *manifest* connection with the affairs of earth, but it will not be their abode. And, of course, the thought of "marriage" among them is at once excluded, (Mark xii. 25.) But large numbers of mankind are promised a resurrection from the dead who are not of "the saints." It was one of the "signs" of our Lord's kingdom, when He was on earth, that the dead were raised. These dead were restored to life in natural bodies. Such resurrection during the times of the kingdom is all that can be anticipated for such as are not "saints." These will probably come under the natural conditions referred to and will multiply. Their bodies, if "natural," will, of course, be corruptible. This is further proved by the fact that they will be capable of a "second death." If the objection arises that the earth would have no room for such population, it may be replied that the promise that all shall be made alive, contains this provision, "But every man in his own order." These multitudes of dead will not be restored to life all together. Moreover, the age to come is to be the time of union and intercourse between these two now sundered departments of God's kingdom, the heavens and earth. The ladder of Jacob's prophetic vision is to be set up. And surely in that day of the opened heavens, room will be found somewhere in God's great universe for all the creatures of His hand.